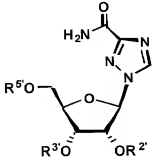
CLAIMS

1. A compound represented by formula II



II

wherein at least one of $R^{2'}$,$R^{3'}$ or $R^{5'}$ is H, R^{20}-$(W)_x$-CO-, R^{20}-$(W)_x$-CS- or R^{20}-$(W)_x$-PO(OH) - ; and wherein at least one of $R^{2'}$,$R^{3'}$ or $R^{5'}$ is not H;

wherein $R^{20}$is alkyl, H, alkanoyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, heterocyclic, $NR^{21}R^{22}$, alkenyl, or alkynyl;

or is alkyl, alkanoyl alkenyl or alkynyl substituted by halo, phenyl, cycloalkyl, $NR^{21}R^{22}$, hydroxy, alkoxy;

or is aryl substituted by phenyl halo, CN, NO_2, OH, R^{28}, O R^{28}, CF_3, SH SR^{21},SOR^{21},SO_2R^{21}; $NR^{21}R^{22}$ CO_2H, CO_2^- , OR^{21}, O^-M^+ or S^-M^+ ;

wherein M^+ is an alkali metal cation;

or R^{20} is- $-(CHR^{21})_e-(CH_2)_f-CO-OR^{22}$,

$-(CHR^{21})_e-(CH_2)_f-OR^{22}$, or $-(CHR^{21})_e-(CH_2)_f-NR^{21}R^{22}$

W is O, NR^{28} or S;

R^{21} is H, alkyl, alkanoyl,Y or aryl or is alkyl, alkanoyl or aryl suabstituted by halo, phenyl, CN, NO_2 OH, CO_2H or alkoxy; and R^{22} is H, alkyl or aryl or is alkyl or aryl substituted by phenyl; halo, CN, NO_2, OH, CO_2H or alkoxy;

or R^{21} and R^{22} taken together with N and one of CHR^{21} , NR^{21}, O, S, SO or SO_2 form a five-, six- or seven- membered ring;
R^{27} is H, OR^{21}, $NR^{21}R^{22}$, R^{20}-$(W)_x$-CO-, R^{20}-$(W)_x$-CS-, $(HO)_2PO$- or R^{20}-$(W)_x$-PO(OH) - or HO-SO_2-;
R^{28} is H, alkanoyl, aryl, alkyl or alkyl substituted by OH, halo or $NR^{21}R^{22}$;

e= 0 to 6, f= 0 to 10, t = 0 to 100; s = 0 to 6000; r = 1 to 5000; and x = 0 or 1;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2. A pharmaceutical composition of a compound of claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

3. A method of using a compound represented by formula II of claim 1 for treating a susceptible viral infection , wherein the method comprises a therapeutically effective amount of a ribavirin derivative of formula **II** of claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

4. A method of using a compound represented by formula II of claim 1 in association with interferon alpha for treating a chronic hepatitis C infection , wherein the method comprises a therapeutically effective amount of a ribavirin derivative of formula **II** of claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof and a therapeutically effective amount of an interferon alpha.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the interferon-alpha is selected from interferon alpha-2a, interferon alpha-2b, a consensus interferon, a purified interferon alpha product or a pegylated interferon-alpha-2a, pegylated interferon-alpha-2b, pegylated consensus interferon.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the interferon-alpha administered is a pegylated interferon alpha-2b and the amount of pegylated interferon-alpha-2b administered is from 0.5 to 2.0 micrograms/kilogram per week on a weekly, TIW, QOD or daily basis,

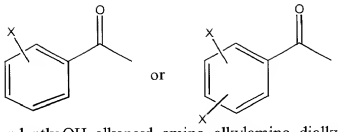
7. The method of claim 4, wherein the interferon-alpha administered is a pegylated interferon alpha-2a and the amount of pegylated interferon alpha-2a administered is from 20 to 250 micrograms per week on a weekly, TIW, QOD or daily basis.

9 The compound of formula II of claim 1, wherein $R^{2'} = R^{3'} = H$.

10 The compound of formula II of claim 1 wherein $R^{2'} = R^{5'} = H$,

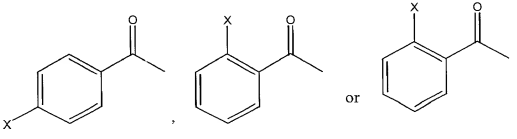
11. The compound of formula II of claim 1 wherein $R^{3'} = R^{5'} = H$.

12. The compound of formula II of claim 1, wherein $R^{5'}$ is one of



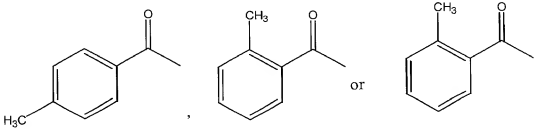
wherein X is independently OH, alkanoyl, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino , alkanoylamino, hydroxyalkyl , alkoxy, alkyl, CN, NO_2 , halo, or alkyl substituted by OH, alkanoyl, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino , alkanoylamino, hydroxyalkyl , alkoxy, CN, NO_2 , or halo.

13 The compound of formula II of claim 1, wherein $R^{5'}$ is

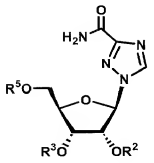


wherein X is OH, $COCH_3$, $OCOCH_3$, NO_2 , NH_2 , $[CH_3]_2N$, $NHCOCH_3$, CH_2OH , CH_3 , OCH_3 , F, Br or Cl.

14 The compound of claim 1, wherein $R^{5'}$ is



15. A method of treating patients having chronic hepatitis C infection comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a ribavirin derivative of formula I and a therapeutically effective amount of interferon-alpha for a time period sufficient to eradicate detectable HCV-RNA at the end of said period of administering and to have no detectable HCV-RNA for at least 24 weeks after the end of said period of administrating, and wherein the ribavirin derivative is represented by formula I:



I

wherein at least one of R^2, R^3 or R^5 is H, R^6-$(W)_x$-CO-, R^6-$(W)_x$-CS-$(HO)_2PO$- ,R^6-$(W)_x$-PO(OH)- or HO-SO_2- and wherein at least one of R^2, R^3 or R^5 is not H;

wherein R^6 is H, alkyl, alkanoyl, cycloalkyl, heterocylic, aryl, $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$, alkenyl, or alkynyl; or is alkyl, alkanoyl, alkenyl or alkynyl substituted by halo, phenyl, cycloalkyl, $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$, hydroxy or alkoxy;

or R^6 is aryl substituted by phenyl, halo, CN, NO_2, OH, R^{18} ,OR^{18}, CF_3, SH SR^{7a},SOR^{7a},SO_2R^{7a}; $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$ CO_2H, CO_2^- M^{+}, O^-M^+ OR^{7a} or S^-M^+;

wherein M^+ is an alkali metal cation;

or R^6 is - -$(CHR^{7a})_e$-$(CH_2)_f$-CO-OR^{7b},

-$(CHR^{7a})_e$-$(CH_2)_f$- OR^{7b} , or -$(CHR^{7a})_e$-$(CH_2)_f$-$NR^{7a}R^{7b}$

W is O, NR^{18} or S;

R^{7a} is H, alkyl, alkanoyl, aryl or is alkyl, alkanoyl or aryl substituted by halo phenyl CN, NO_2, OH, CO_2H or alkoxy; and R^{7b} is H, alkyl or aryl or is alkyl or aryl substituted by halo, CN, NO_2, CO_2H, OH or alkoxy;

or R^{7a} and R^{7b} taken together with N and one of CHR^{7a} , NR^{7a}, O, S, SO or SO_2 form a five-, six- or seven- membered ring;

R^{17} is H , OR^{7a}, $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$, R^6-$(W)_x$-CO-, R^6-$(W)_x$-CS-, $(HO)_2PO$- , R^6-$(W)_x$-PO(OH) - , or HO-SO_2- ;

R^{18} is H, aryl, alkyl, or alkyl substituted by OH, halo , $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$, or alkanoyl;

e = 0 to 6, f = 0 to 10, and x = 0 or 1;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein R^5 is R^6CO wherein R^6 is aryl substituted by phenyl, halo, CN, NO_2, OH, R^{18}, OR^{18}, CF_3, SH SR^{7a}, SOR^{7a}, SO_2R^{7a}; $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$ CO_2H, $CO_2^- M^{+}$, $O^- M^+$ OR^{7a} or $S^- M^+$ and wherein M^+ is an alkali metal cation.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein R^5 is R^6CO wherein R^6 is phenyl substituted by, halo, CN, NO_2, OH, R^{18}, OR^{18}, CF_3, SH SR^{7a}, SOR^{7a}, SO_2R^{7a}; $NR^{7a}R^{7b}$ CO_2H, $CO_2^- M^{+}$, $O^- M^+$ OR^{7a} or $S^- M^+$. and wherein M^+ is an alkali metal cation.